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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/784,197

02/24/2004

Kenji Ando

0445-0347P

9246

2292

7590

11/29/2006

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EXAMINER

STEPHENS, JACQUELINE F

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3761

DATE MAILED: 11/29/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/784,197	Applicant(s) ANDO ET AL.	
	Examiner Jacqueline F. Stephens	Art Unit 3761	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 July 2006.
 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 2, and 4-12 have been considered but are not persuasive. The examiner has relied on the previously cited reference, Torigoshi, but has provided an English equivalent to reiterate the prior rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

4. Claims 1, 2, and 4-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Torigoshi JP 2002159528, the examiner will reference the English equivalent, which is US Patent Application Publication 2004/0030317.

As to claims 1, 7, 10, and 12, Torigoshi describes an absorbent article and process of making the article (Figures 32-36) having a front portion F and a rear portion B and comprising an outer sheet 20 that provides an outer surface of the absorbent article, an inner sheet 512 disposed on the inner side of the outer sheet, and plurality of elastic members 527, 528, 527a, 527b for making below-waist gathers disposed between the outer sheet and inner sheet (paragraph 0229 and 0231). The article further comprises a patterned sheet 100 having a patten disposed between the outer sheet and the inner sheet in the widthwise middle area of at least one of the front portion and the rear portion (Figures 50A and 50B and paragraph 0259). The elastic members each have a portion (a) contributory to elastic extensibility and contractibility in each of the regions outside the lateral sides of the patterned sheet, and a portion (b) substantially non-contributory to elastic extensibility and contractibility in the region inside the lateral sides of the patterned sheet (paragraphs 0228, 0229, 0231, and 0232). Torigoshi discloses the elastics are adhered between the nonwoven fabric of the outer sheet 520 (paragraph 0229). Torigoshi discloses the claimed invention except for Torigoshi does not specifically disclose the elastic edges between the patterned sheet and inner sheet. Torigoshi discloses the patterned sheet is interposed between the external sheet and additonally can be printed on the outer sheet or the back of the inner sheet. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to modify Torigoshi to have the elastic ends between the patterned sheet and inner sheet since rearranging parts of an invention involves only routine skill in the art.

As to claim 2, Torigoshi discloses a patterned sheet having a graphic on the absorbent article (Figure 1). Torigoshi does not disclose a total transmittance value. High Light transmittance values are known in the art for disposable articles comprising graphics seen through the outer cover of the article. For instance, Jordan et al. US 2001/0031954 teaches a high light transmittance value of 80% or higher for an outer cover graphic (paragraph 0110). Light transmittance values would have been obvious by optimizing the opacity of the film, filler material, or density of the material. Moreover, "discovering optimum values only involves routine skill in the art", *In re Boesch*, 617 F. 2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

As to claims 4-6, and 11 the claims are product claims directed to a process of making the article. "Even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process." *In re Thorpe*, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985) (citations omitted). MPEP 2113.

As to claim 8, Torigoshi discloses the outer sheet 520 is a nonwoven fabric (paragraph 0216).

As to claim 9, Torigoshi discloses a reduced basis weight nonwoven is desired (paragraph 0162) and a basis weight less than 40 gsm is preferred (paragraph 0284). To discover the optimal basis weight for the intended use only involves routine skill in the art, *In re Boesch*, 617 F. 2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

Conclusion

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of


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the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jacqueline F. Stephens whose telephone number is (571) 272-4937. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on (571) 272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Jacqueline F Stephens
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3761

October 16, 2006